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Current Employment Statistics Highlights



December 2019

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Prepared by Analysts of the National Estimates Branch
Current Employment Statistics Survey
U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

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Current Employment Statistics Summary, December 2019

Nonfarm payroll employment rose by 145,000 in December. Over the year, job growth totaled 2.1 million, compared with a gain of 2.7 million in 2018. In December, retail trade and health care added jobs over the month, while mining lost jobs.

The employment change for November revised down from +266,000 to +256,000, and the change for October also revised down from +156,000 to +152,000. Incorporating revisions, job growth has averaged 184,000 per month over the past 3 months.

Average hourly earnings for all employees on private, nonfarm payrolls rose by 3 cents, or 0.1 percent, in December. Hourly earnings are up 2.9 percent over the year. Average weekly hours, at 34.3 hours, were unchanged over the month.

+41,000 Retail Trade

Employment in retail trade rose by 41,000 in December. Within the industry, clothing and clothing accessory stores added 33,000 jobs, more than offsetting a loss of 22,000 in November. Employment in building material and garden supply stores also added jobs over the month (+7,000), following a decline of 6,000 in November.

Employment in total nonfarm

Over-the-month change, January 2016–December 2019

Seasonally adjusted, in thousands



Over the past year, employment in retail trade showed little net change (+9,000), similar to employment in 2018 (+14,000).

+36,000 Education and Health Services

Employment in health care rose by 28,000 in December, with ambulatory health care

services (+23,000) and hospitals (+9,000) contributing to the growth.

In 2019, employment in health care expanded by 399,000, compared with 350,000 jobs gained in 2018.

Current Employment Statistics Survey Summary, December 2019

+20,000 Construction

Employment in construction changed little (+20,000) in December. Over the year, the industry added 151,000 jobs, less than half the 307,000 gain in 2018.

+10,000 Professional and Business Services

Employment in professional and business services changed little in December. Over the year, employment in the industry increased by 397,000, compared with 561,000 jobs added in 2018.

-9,000 Mining and Logging

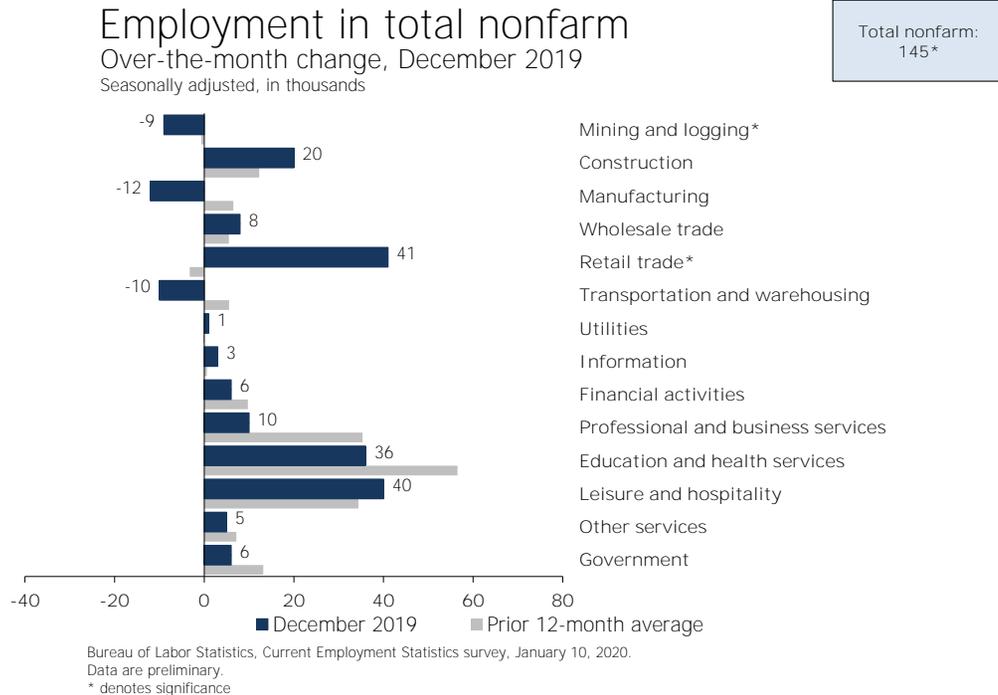
Mining employment fell by 8,000 in December. Support activities for mining (-8,000) and coal mining (-1,000) accounted for the loss. Oil and gas extraction added 3,000 jobs.

In 2019, employment in mining declined by 24,000, after rising by 63,000 in 2018.

-10,000 Transportation and Warehousing

Employment in transportation and warehousing changed little (-10,000) in December, with couriers and messenger services accounting for a loss of 9,000 jobs.

Over the year, employment in transportation and warehousing rose by

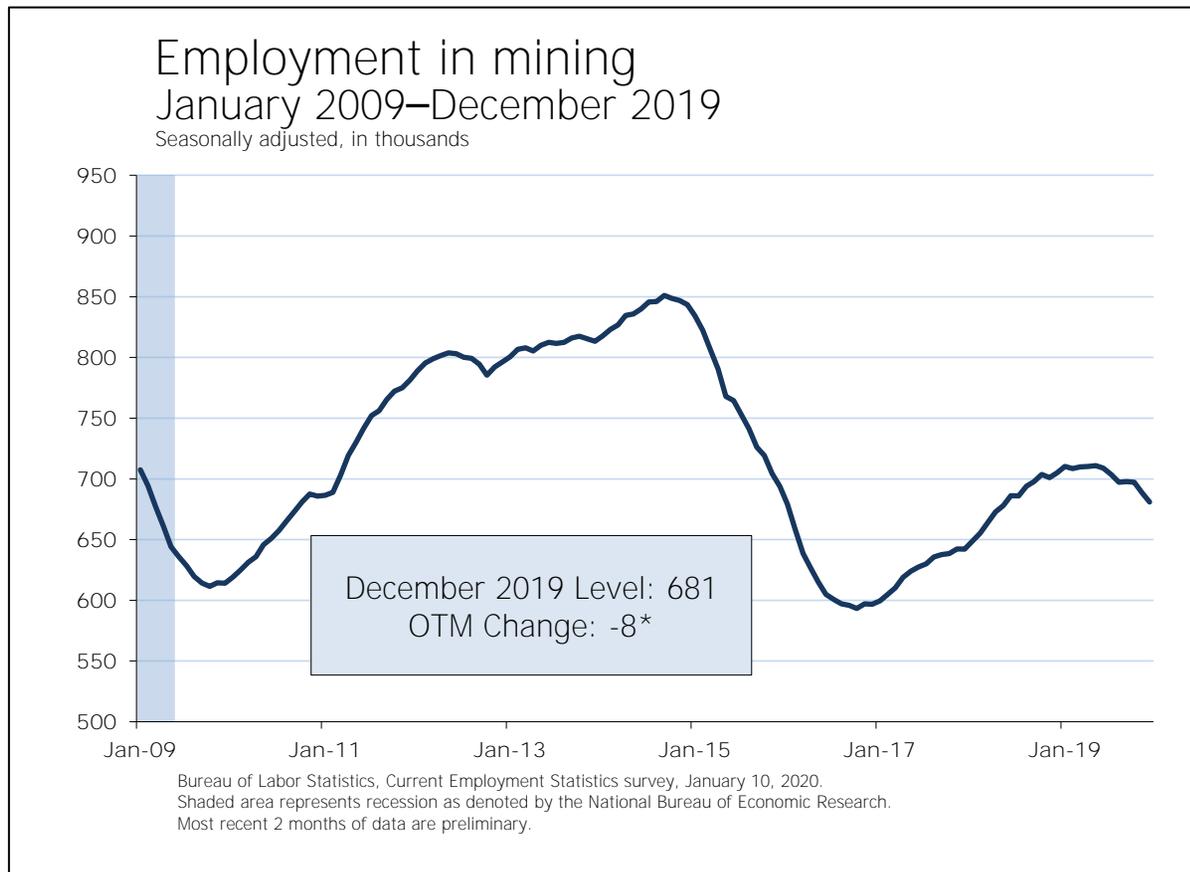


57,000, compared with an increase of 216,000 in 2018.

-12,000 Manufacturing

Employment in manufacturing changed little over the month (-12,000) and over the year (+46,000). In 2018, employment in the industry rose by 264,000.

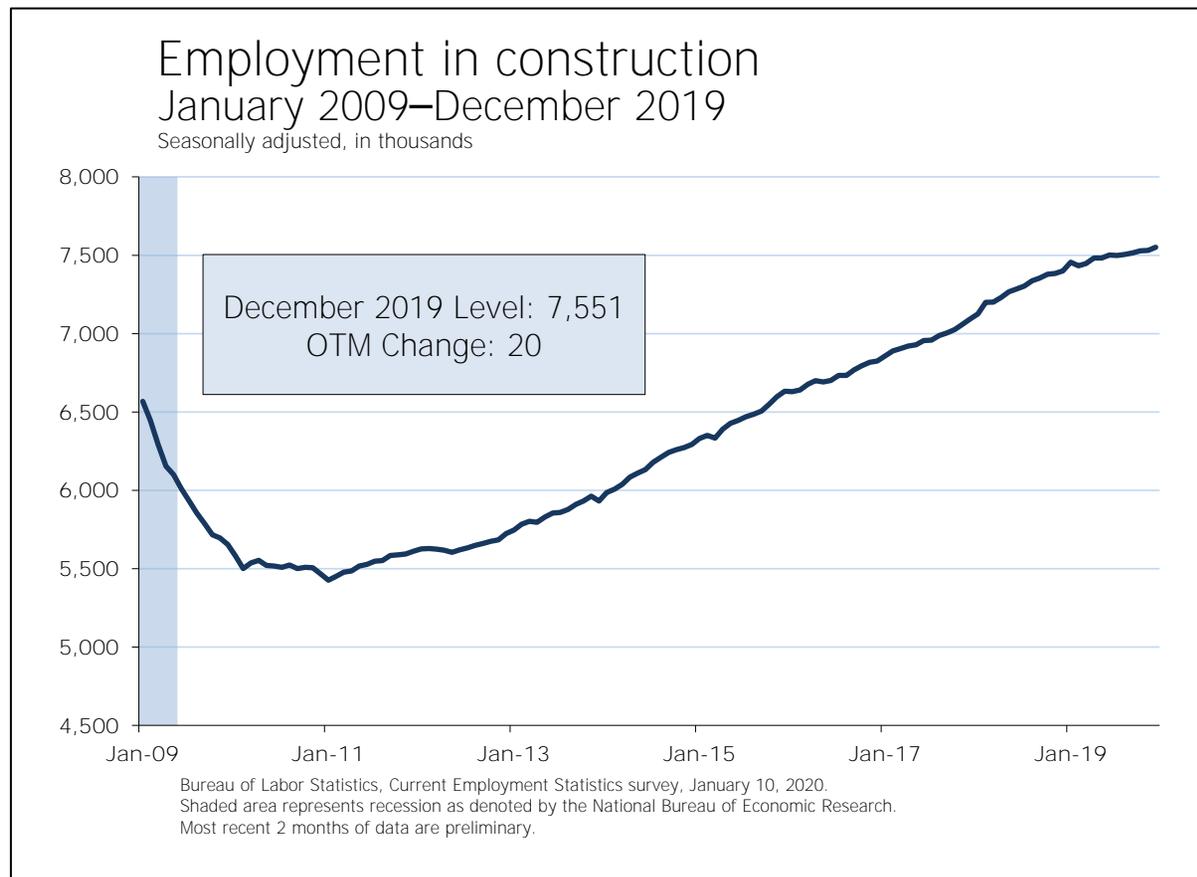
Mining and Logging



Mining employment declined by 8,000 in December. Job losses in support activities for mining (-8,000) and mining, except oil and gas (-2,000) were partially offset by a gain in oil and gas extraction employment (+3,000). Since reaching an employment peak in May 2019, mining has lost 30,000 jobs.

In December, the contraction in mining employment was reflected by a decline in the number of [domestic rotary oil rigs](#).

Construction



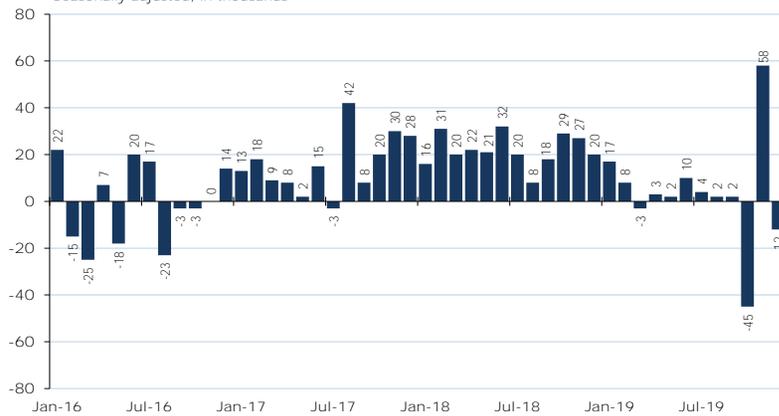
Construction employment changed little in December (+20,000). In 2019, construction added 151,000 jobs, down from the 307,000 added in 2018.

The flatness in construction employment in December followed increases in [construction spending](#) and [new home sales](#) in November.

Manufacturing

Employment in manufacturing

Over-the-month change, January 2016–December 2019
Seasonally adjusted, in thousands

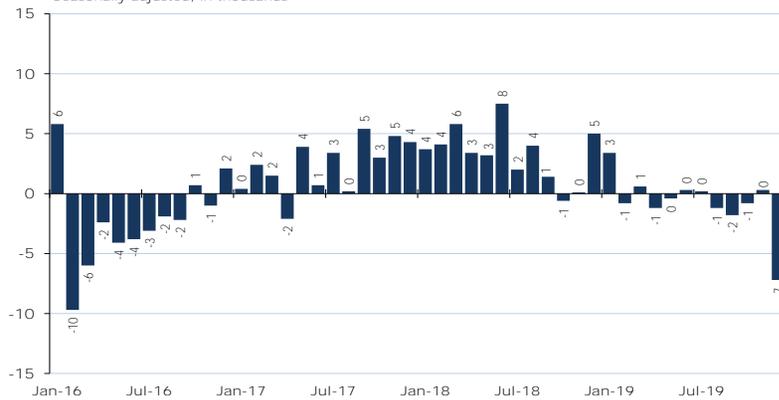


Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics survey, January 10, 2020.
Most recent 2 months of data are preliminary.

Manufacturing employment changed little in December (-12,000). Over the year, manufacturing employment also changed little (+46,000), well below the 264,000 jobs added in 2018.

Employment in fabricated metal products

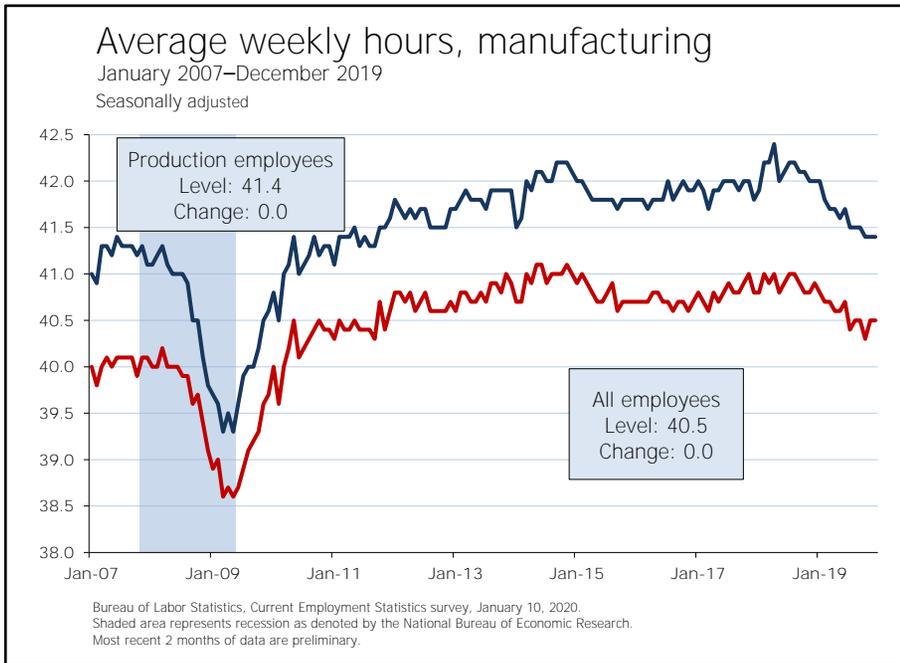
Over-the-month change, January 2016–December 2019
Seasonally adjusted, in thousands



Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics survey, January 10, 2020.
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Employment in fabricated metal products decreased by 7,000 in December, the industry's largest 1-month employment decline since February 2016.

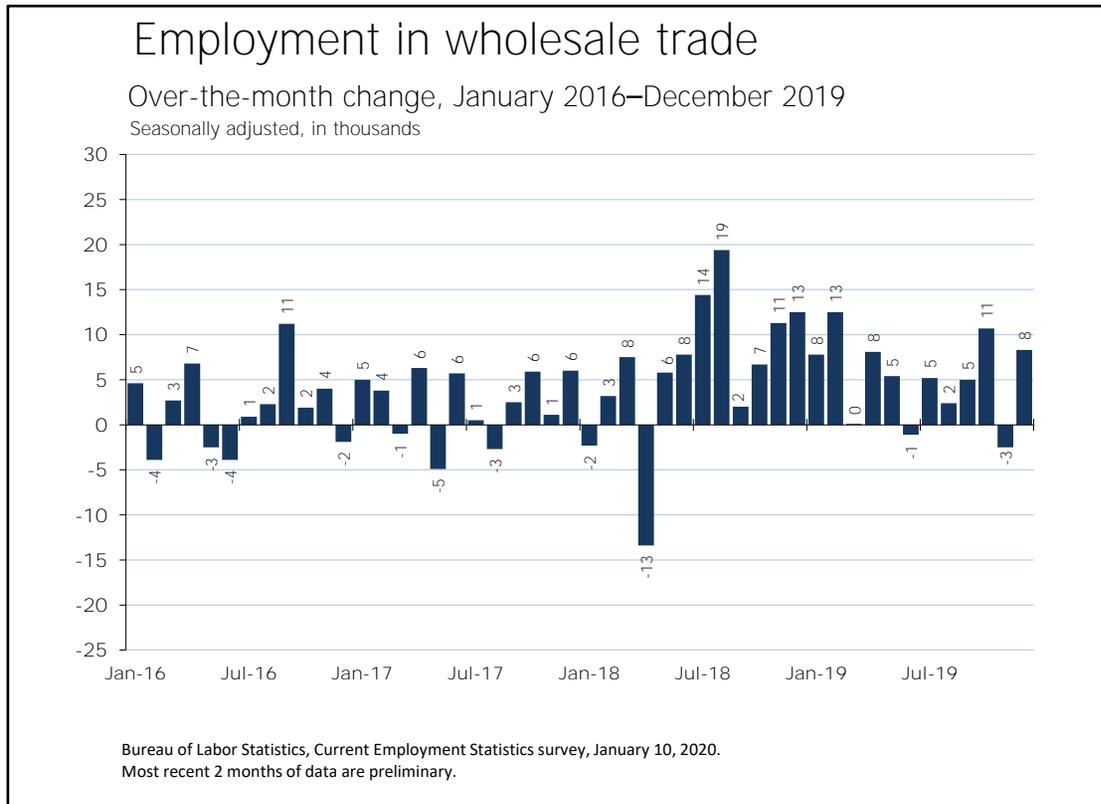
Manufacturing



In December, the 1-month diffusion index for manufacturing fell 21.1 points to 44.7. The index has been below 50 in 4 of the past 5 months. A value below 50 indicates more manufacturing industries are losing jobs than adding them.

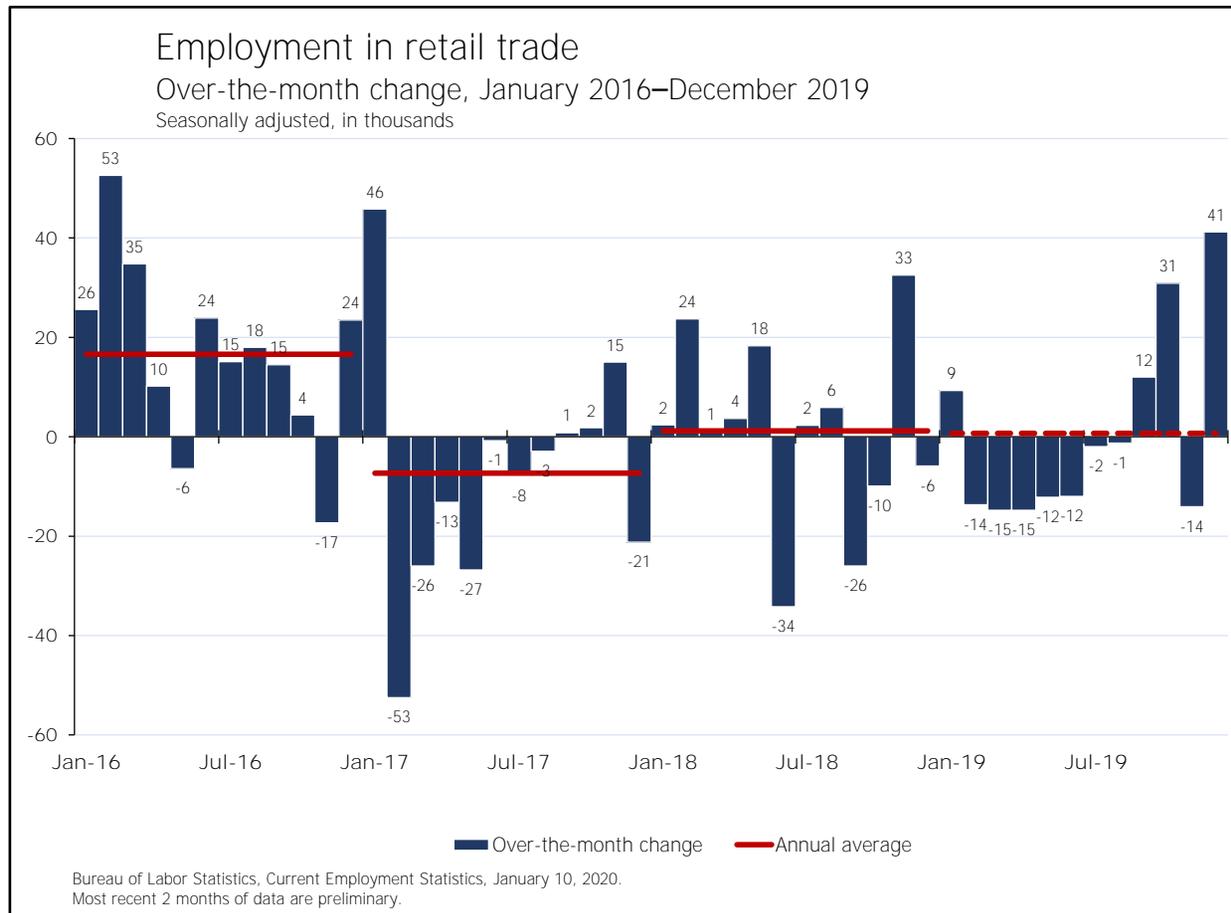
Average weekly hours of all employees in manufacturing were unchanged at 40.5 hours in December, but have declined 0.5 hour since reaching a peak in August 2018. The average workweek of production employees was unchanged at 41.4 hours, but has declined 1.0 hour since reaching a peak in April 2018.

Wholesale Trade



Employment in wholesale trade changed little in December (+8,000). In 2019, wholesale trade added 62,000 jobs, slightly less than the 75,000 added in 2018. Durable goods added 42,000 jobs in 2019 compared to 64,000 added the prior year.

Retail Trade

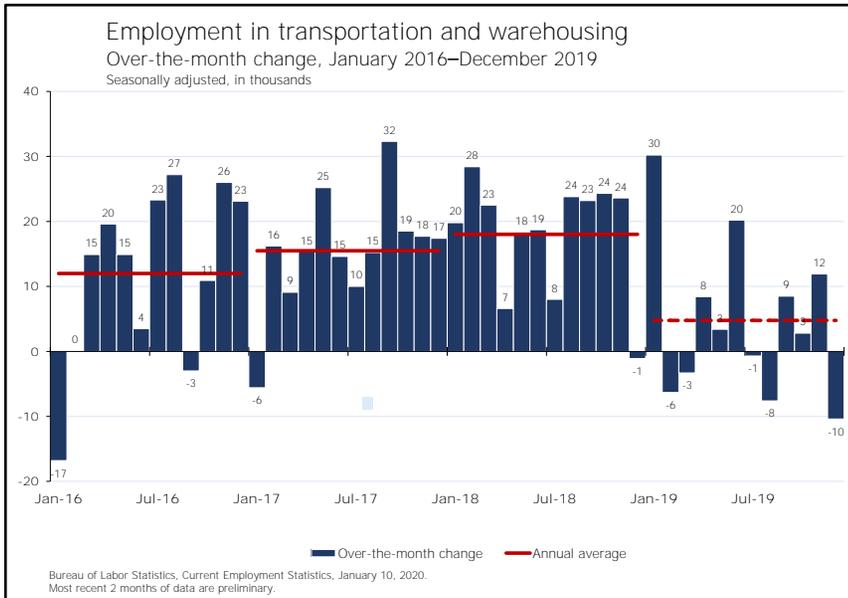


Employment in retail trade increased by 41,000 in December. Over the year, industry employment changed little (+9,000), but has declined by 111,000 since reaching a peak in January 2017.

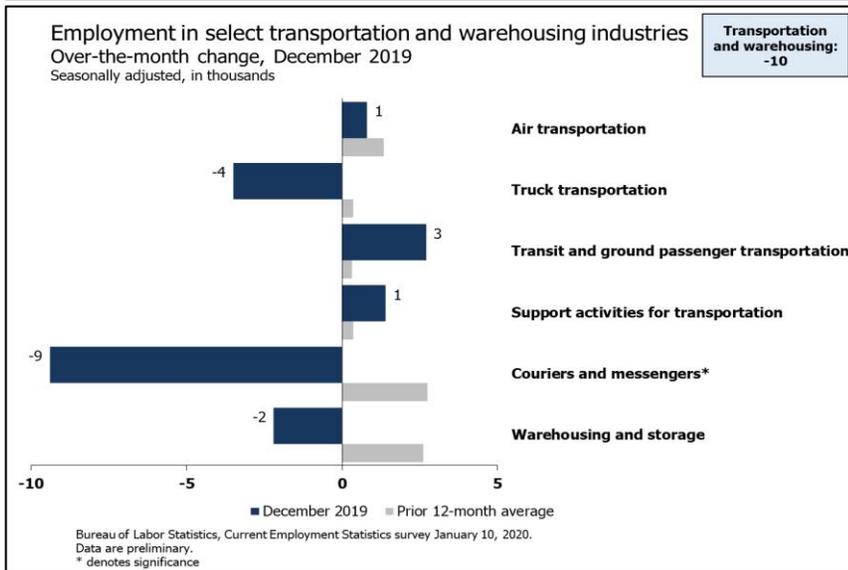
Over the month, employment gains occurred in clothing and clothing accessories stores (+33,000) and building materials and garden supply stores (+7,000). These job gains mostly offset losses in November.

Recent retail-related economic indicators are mixed. The per gallon price of regular gasoline declined in December ([U.S. Energy Information Administration](#)). [Retail Sales](#) and [Real Personal Disposable Income](#) were up in November. Conversely, the [Consumer Confidence Index](#) declined slightly in December.

Transportation and Warehousing

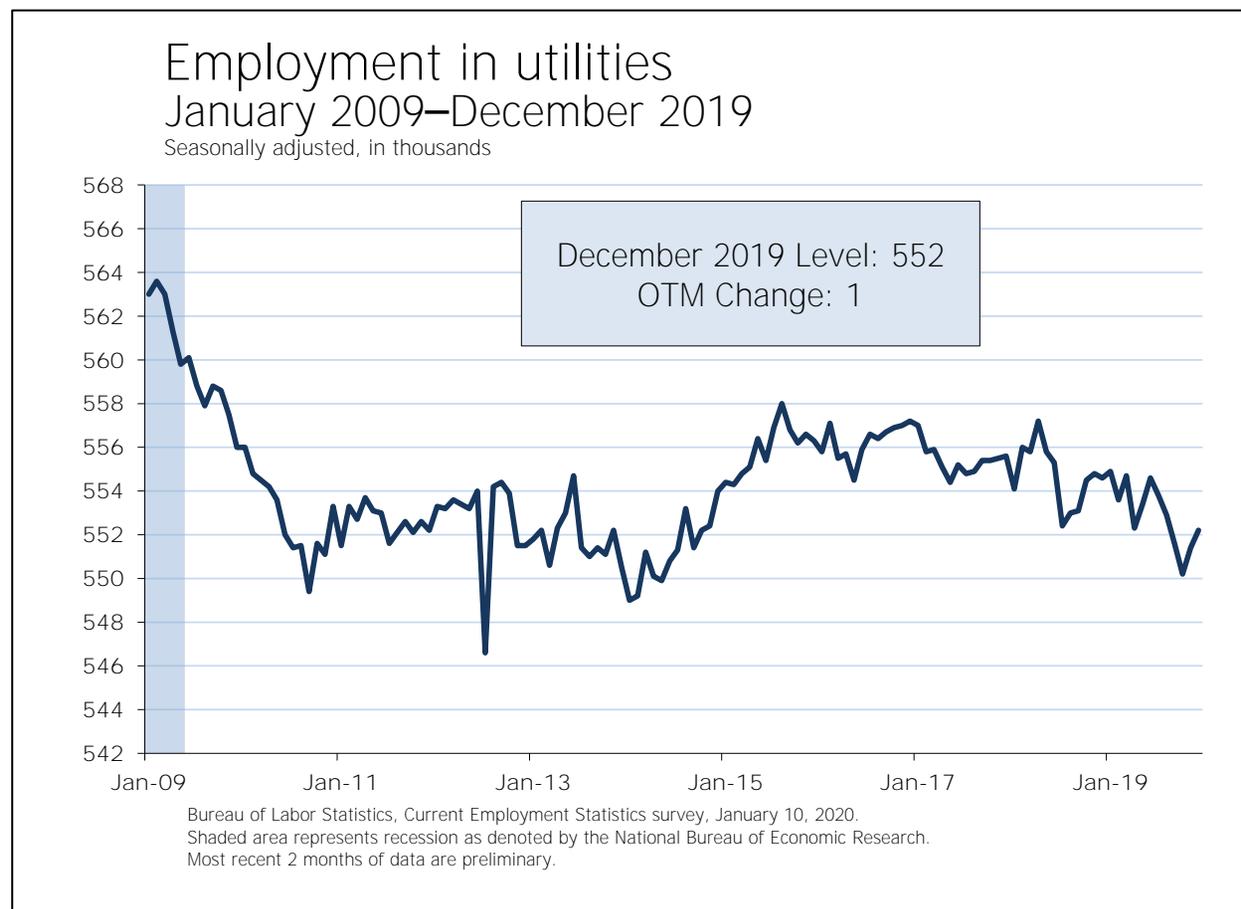


Employment in transportation and warehousing changed little (-10,000) in December. In 2019, job growth slowed considerably in the industry, with only 57,000 jobs added, compared to 216,000 jobs added in 2018. Rail transportation lost 21,000 jobs, accounting for most of the job losses in 2019, while job growth slowed in couriers and messengers and in warehousing and storage. Employment in truck transportation changed little (-2,000) in 2019 after rising by 44,000 jobs in 2018.



Within transportation and warehousing, couriers and messengers lost 9,000 jobs in December, more than offsetting a gain of 5,000 in November.

Utilities



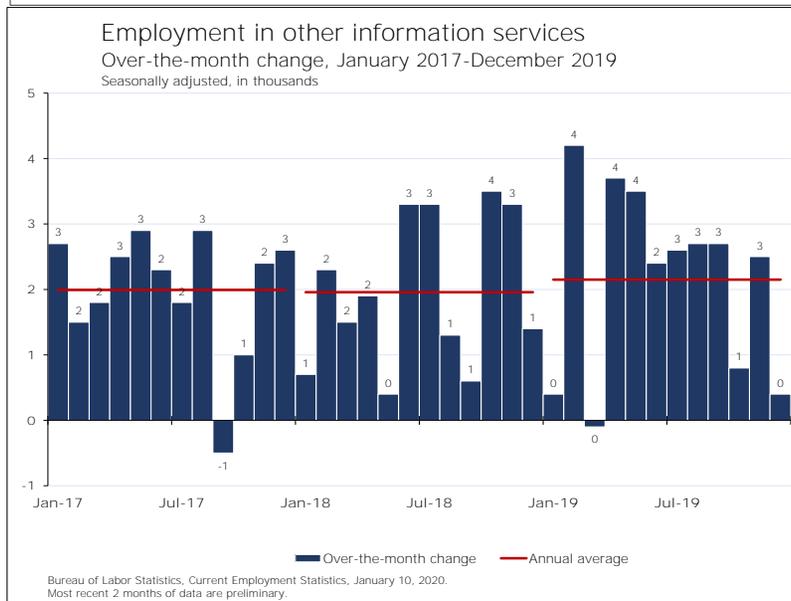
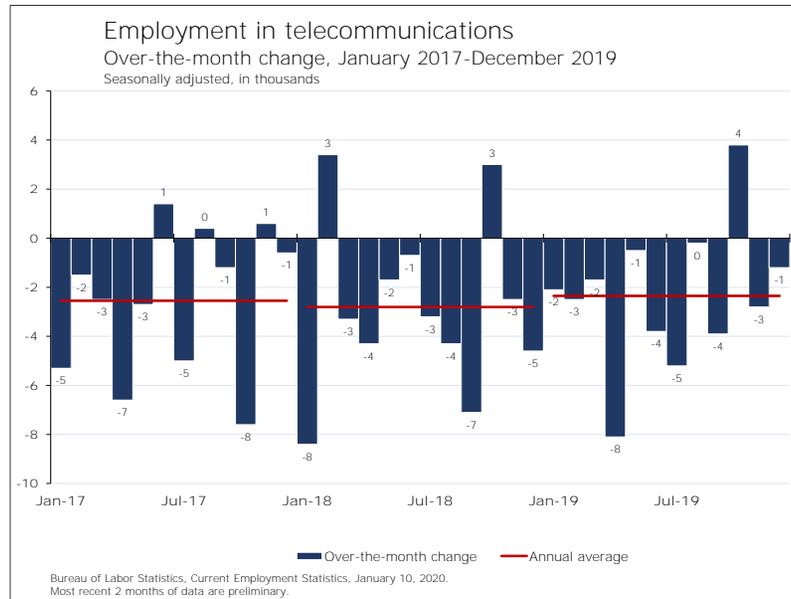
Employment in utilities was flat in December (+1,000) and showed little net change in 2019 (-2,000).

Information

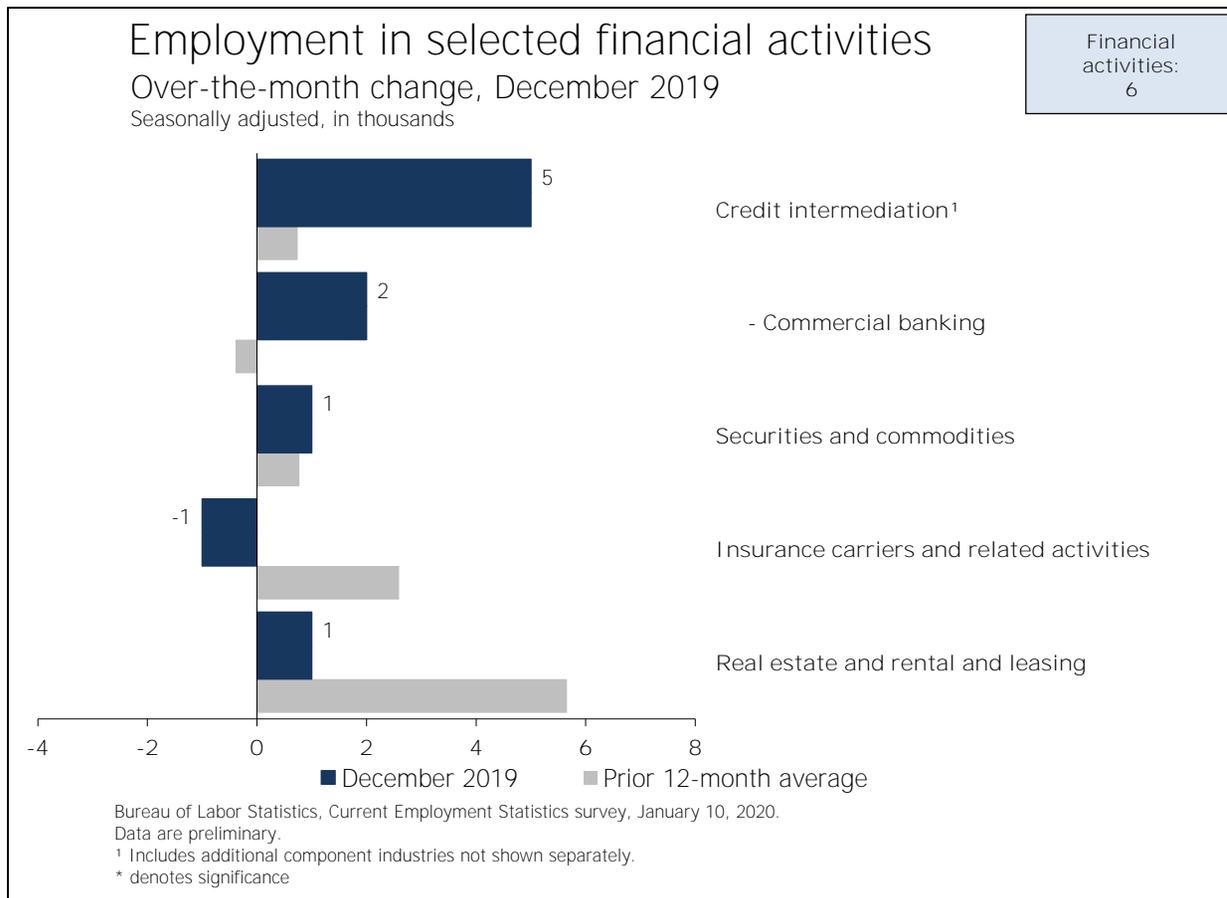
Employment in information was flat in December (+3,000) and showed little net change over the year.

Telecommunications lost 28,000 jobs in 2019, compared to a loss of 34,000 jobs in 2018.

Other information services employment—which includes telephone-based information services, internet entertainment sites, and web search portals—added 26,000 jobs in 2019. This industry had added 24,000 jobs in 2018.



Financial Activities



Employment in financial activities changed little in December (+6,000). In 2019, the industry added 122,000 jobs, after adding 115,000 jobs in 2018.

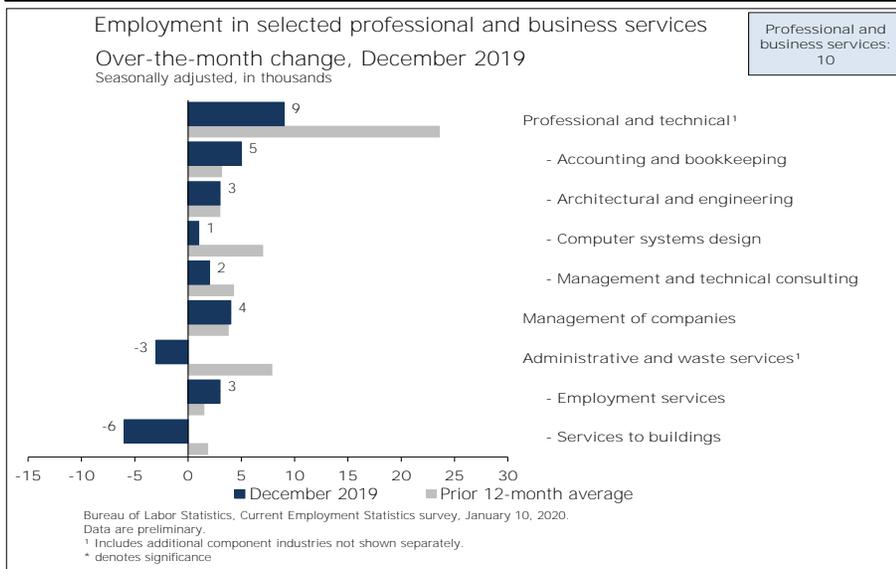
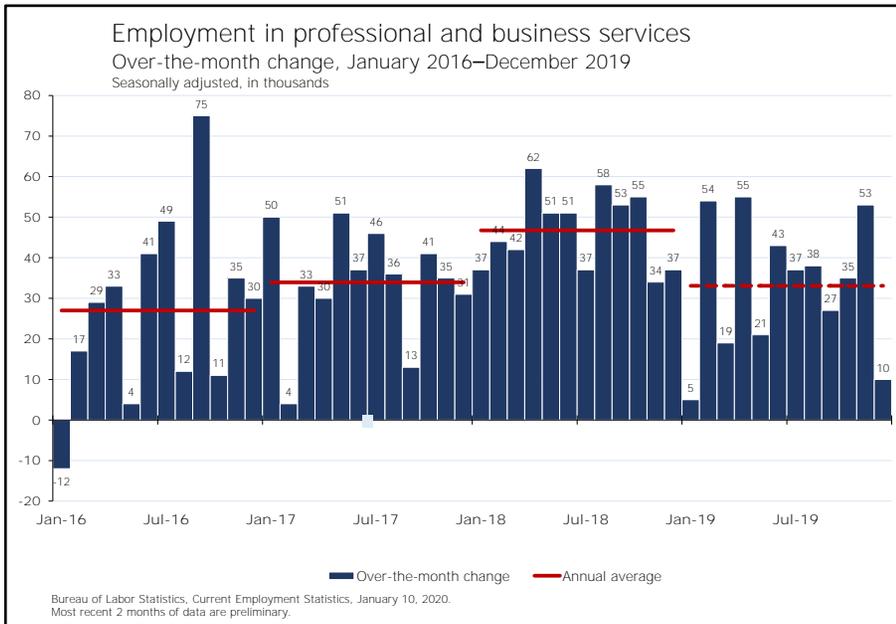
Real estate (+51,000) and insurance carriers and related activities (+29,000) accounted for most of the jobs added in financial activities during 2019.

Professional and Business Services

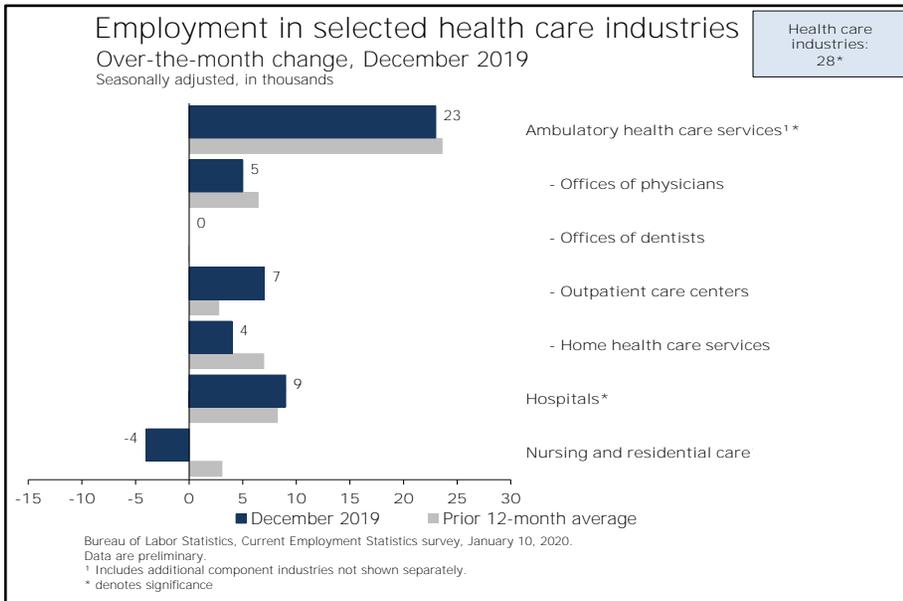
Employment in professional and business services changed little in December (+10,000), well below the industry's prior 6-month average (+39,000). Below-trend employment changes occurred throughout most component industries.

In 2019, employment in professional and business services increased by 397,000, compared to a gain of 561,000 in 2018. Employment growth slowed significantly in administrative and waste services (+77,000) in 2019, compared to (+207,000) in 2018. A majority of this slowing occurred in temporary help services.

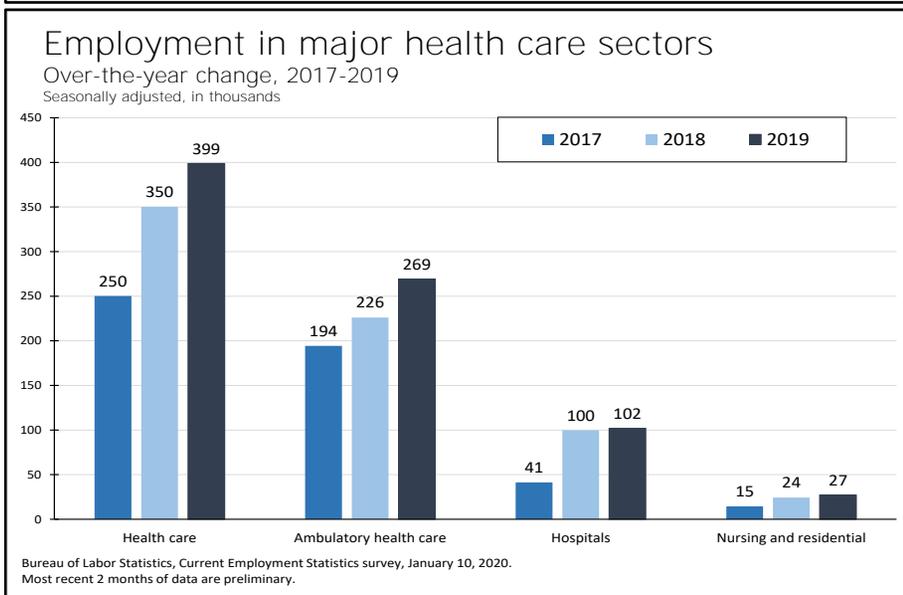
Employment in professional and technical services increased by 275,000 in 2019, while management of companies added 46,000 jobs. Both industries experienced slightly slower growth in 2019 compared to 2018.



Private Education and Health Services



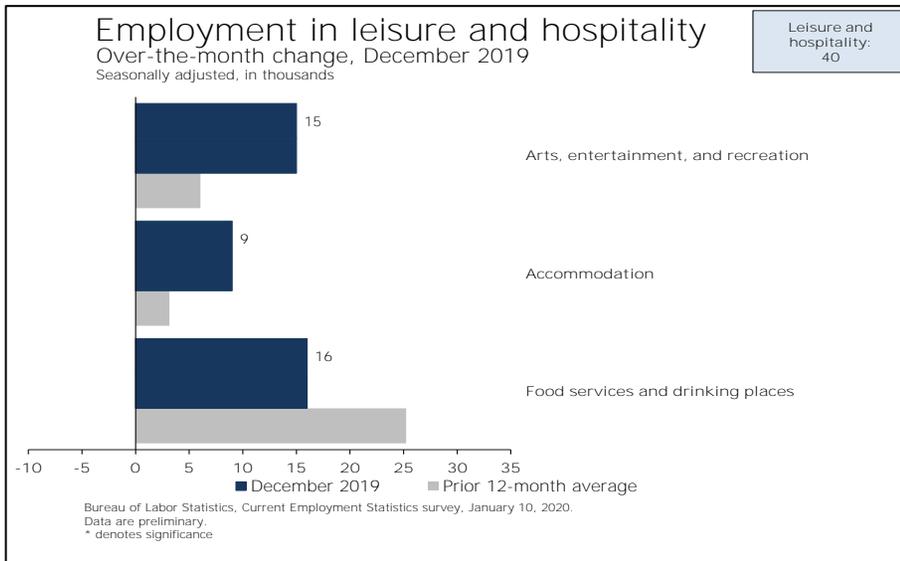
Employment in health care grew by 28,000 in December. Employment gains were concentrated in ambulatory health care services (+23,000) and hospitals (+9,000), while nursing care facilities lost 7,000 jobs.



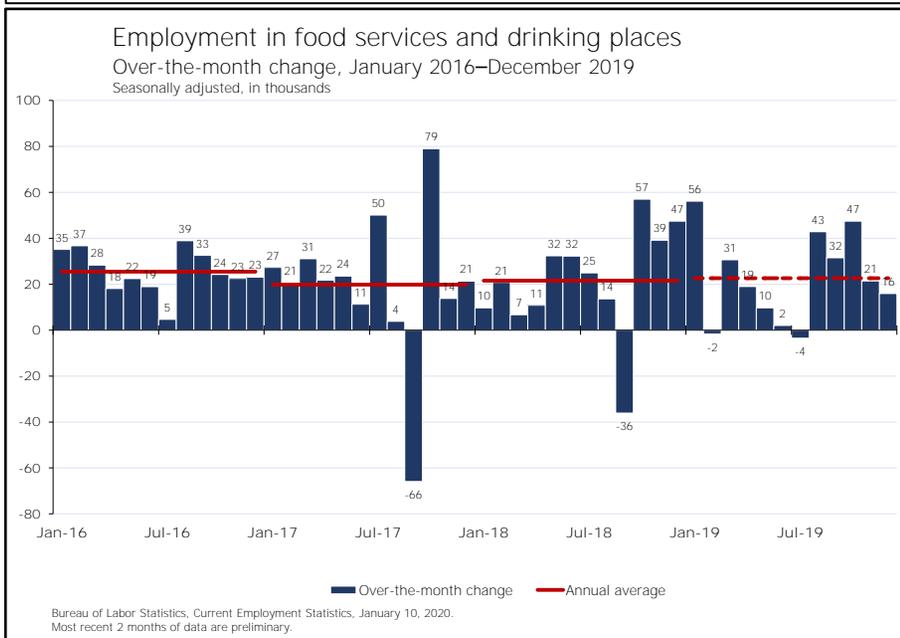
Health care added 399,000 jobs in 2019, compared to 350,000 in 2018. Within ambulatory health care services, job gains in 2019 were led by home health care services (+78,000) and offices of physicians (+76,000). Hospitals added 102,000 jobs in 2019, in line with the gains in 2018.

Employment in social assistance grew by 158,000 in 2019, with individual and family services accounting for 76 percent of the growth.

Leisure and Hospitality



In December, employment in leisure and hospitality continued to trend up (+40,000). The industry added 388,000 jobs in 2019, after adding 359,000 jobs in 2018.



Employment in food services and drinking places continued to trend up in December (+16,000). The industry has gained an average of 32,000 jobs over the prior 5 months.

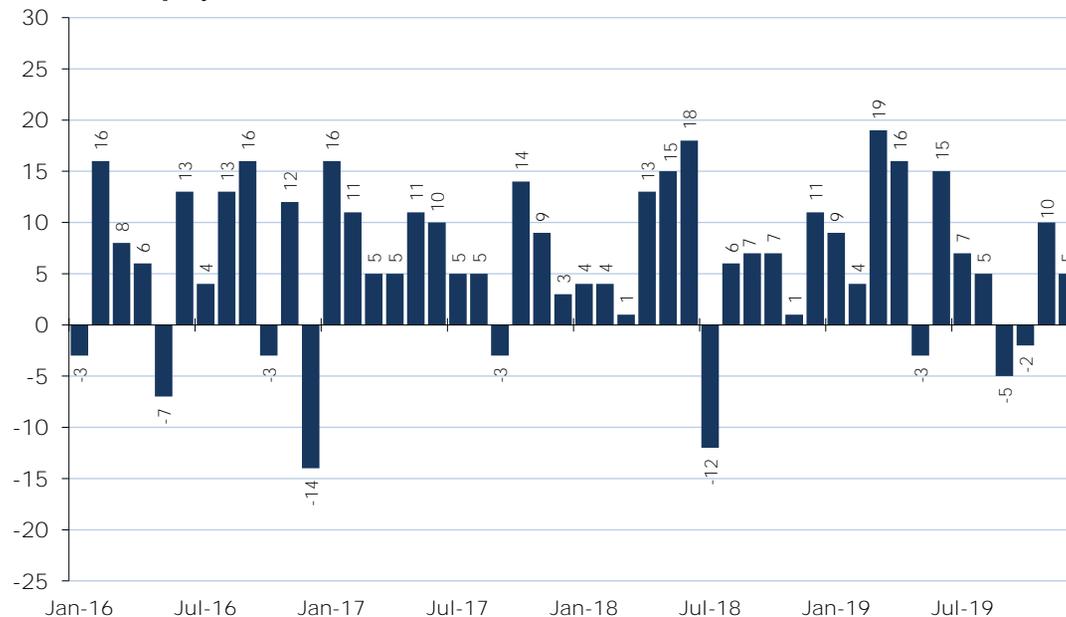
The [U.S. Census Bureau](#) reported positive year-over-year sales growth for food services and drinking places throughout 2019, including 5.1 percent in November—the most recent month for which data is available. The industry also benefitted from lower [gas prices](#) and modest [inflation](#) in 2019, setting the stage for employment to grow by 271,000 jobs, similar to growth in 2018.

Other Services

Employment in other services

Over-the-month change, January 2016–December 2019

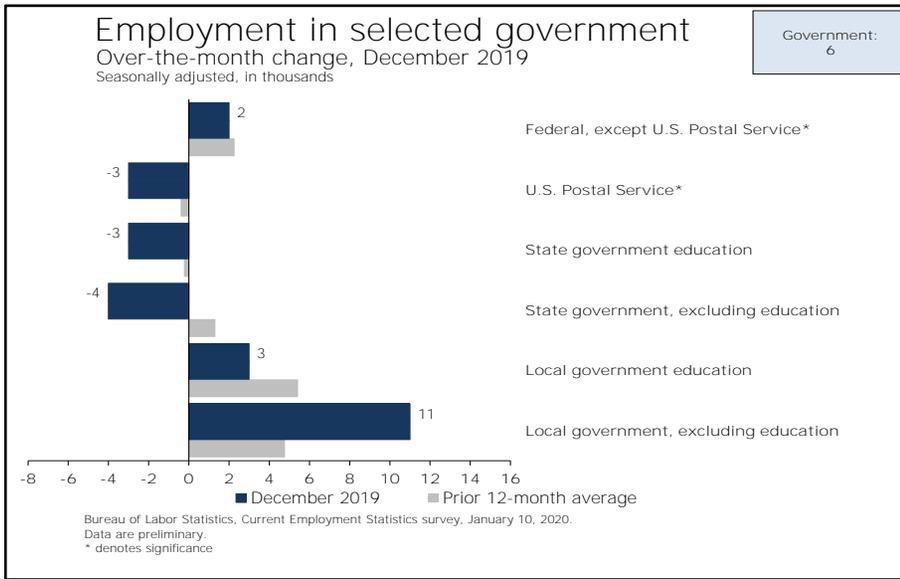
Seasonally adjusted, in thousands



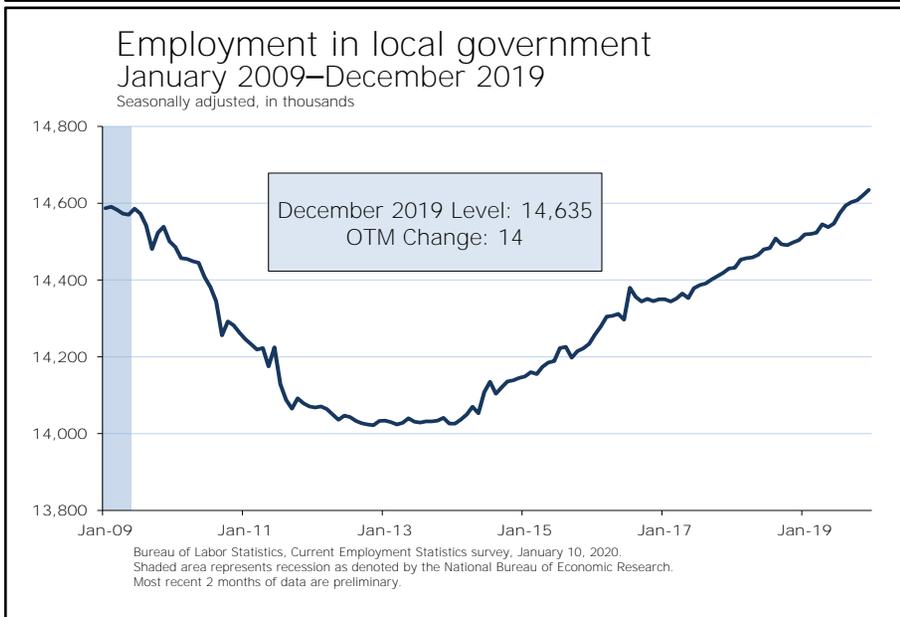
Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics survey, January 10, 2020.
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Employment in other services changed little in December (+5,000), with no significant changes in any component industry. In 2019, other services employment rose by 80,000, similar to gains in 2018.

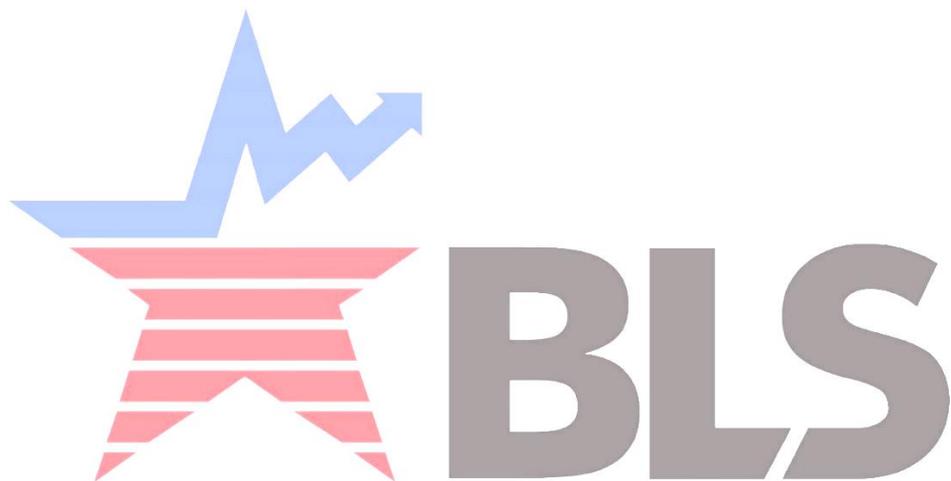
Government



In December, employment in government changed little (+6,000). Over the year, government added 161,000 jobs, compared to 96,000 in 2018.



Employment in local government continued to trend up in December (+14,000) and now exceeds its most recent peak in July 2008 by 25,000. Local government added 131,000 jobs in 2019, compared to 74,000 in 2018.



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